

Schultz, Roger US Army

[00:00:16.57] ROGER SCHULTZ: I was 24 when I reported for duty in Vietnam. I grew up in northwest Iowa. One brother, two sisters, on a farm is my origin. So pretty humble beginnings when you think about where I came from. First six years of school in a one room schoolhouse.

[00:00:34.96] JOE GALLOWAY: Oh, one of those--

[00:00:36.28] ROGER SCHULTZ: And--

[00:00:36.94] JOE GALLOWAY: What do you consider your hometown in Iowa?

[00:00:39.49] ROGER SCHULTZ: Merrill. Merrill, Iowa. Small town, little town, maybe a couple hundred people.

[00:00:42.58] JOE GALLOWAY: [CHUCKLES]

[00:00:48.91] ROGER SCHULTZ: I joined the local Guard unit in northwest Iowa to be a track vehicle mechanic. So I had four years of enlisted time before I went to OCS. And so the officer candidate program at the time was really based on a Fort Benning infantry officer candidate program. It was a one year program that the Iowa Military Academy hosted.

[00:01:10.54] So four years enlisted, and then took a commission as an infantry lieutenant in 1967. So that's the basis of my commissioning. The unit I was in was a high priority unit, Selected Reserve forces is what they were called. And the intent of a Selected Reserve force is, we may need you--

[00:01:30.97] JOE GALLOWAY: And you may go.

[00:01:32.26] ROGER SCHULTZ: --and-- not in large numbers in the Guard and Reserve back in those days, but we may need you was the message. And so our unit was training like two weekends a month, which for most Guard units was unusual.

[00:01:41.92] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:01:42.94] ROGER SCHULTZ: So after commissioning, I went straight to a rifle platoon in a mechanized infantry unit. But my grounding-- and I still feel good about it today-- my grounding is as an enlisted Soldier in that mech company.

[00:02:03.39] ROGER SCHULTZ: Infantry officer basic course and jungle school were the two courses that I took. I was actually going to college. I'll just give you a quick story. I was going to college in Morningside College in northwest Iowa at the time. A battalion commander called up and said, you need to come down to the armory, which was the battalion headquarters. And he called 13 of us together and said, you guys have two days to report to Fort Benning, Georgia. So I went around got what grades I could from the professors and reported to Fort Benning.

[00:02:35.80] So infantry officer basic course, went to Fort Carson, then went through the Army training tests for platoon, company, battalion level, and brigade level tests. And then jungle school. And then we all, as a part of that, I was in the Guard unit that was mobilized, and so we were taken as individuals from Fort Carson--

[00:02:55.54] JOE GALLOWAY: Right.

[00:02:55.87] ROGER SCHULTZ: --through jungle school. And then reported to Vietnam as individuals.

[00:02:59.71] JOE GALLOWAY: So you were part of that very small cadre of people--

[00:03:01.72] ROGER SCHULTZ: It was about 30,000. Maybe a little more than 30,000.

[00:03:05.41] JOE GALLOWAY: Out of three million?

[00:03:07.54] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah.

[00:03:08.23] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:03:08.68] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah a small number, right.

[00:03:09.91] JOE GALLOWAY: Small number.

[00:03:10.33] ROGER SCHULTZ: So we went from there to Vietnam. About half of our battalion from Fort Carson went.

[00:03:16.39] JOE GALLOWAY: So you were still an LT?

[00:03:17.92] ROGER SCHULTZ: I was. ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, Bien Hoa was where we-- 90th Replacement is where we went through. I remember, probably 30,000 foot or whatever, we came in kind of high. I remember the landscape was beautiful. Countryside was beautiful. The closer you got to the ground, I saw little pockets and little holes in vegetation in the jungles. And at the time I didn't appreciate what that was, but I mean, those were bomb craters. Those were places where we had had significant contact with the enemy. And so the closer we got to the ground, then the perspective, the reality of war, and what that means on a country like that, starts to take a little different meaning.

[00:04:08.77] When I got off the plane, the first realization, one, you know you're in a combat zone because everybody anticipates that. It was really hot. It was always hot. Every day in Vietnam was unbelievably hot.

[00:04:25.23] JOE GALLOWAY: Hot and wet or hot and dry?

[00:04:27.25] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, it could be both. Yeah, we had both. And probably the unknown, just an anticipation-- what are we going to do next? And of course, when you grow up

in units, everybody-- I mean, you develop a certain confidence, a sense of belonging, and care about other Soldiers. Well, when you go as an individual, that's a different experience.

[00:04:49.36] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:04:50.35] ROGER SCHULTZ: And so we went through the replacement routine at the 90th Replacement. I get a call from the replacement office said, you're going to the Wolfhounds. This would be at the 1st or the 2nd of the 27th, which is the 25th Division light outfit. And I had heard the Wolfhounds was a pretty good outfit, so I felt good about that. And then they called me back said, we've got a mech outfit, had some rough days up Tay Ninh area with lieutenants.

[00:05:19.12] And so you're now going to the 2nd of the 22nd, which was a mechanized infantry unit that really came by way of the 4th Division, down to III Corps, is now part of the 25th. So my mech experience as an enlisted Soldier, and a short while as a platoon leader, is what got me an assignment with the 2nd of the 22nd. That whole experience is a blur today, but it had happened in a hurry.

[00:05:44.55] JOE GALLOWAY: Happened in a hurry. And tell me about what your job was when you landed with that outfit?

[00:05:51.28] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah. Platoon leader, rifle platoon leader to start, and then later, I was a reconnaissance platoon leader. So I led two combat platoons during my tour. Then you know the deal--

[00:06:05.30] JOE GALLOWAY: Did you platoon lead the whole year?

[00:06:07.25] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, I did. Not quite, it was about 9 and 1/2 months, which is a separate story. And if we want to get into that later, we can. But anyway, I elected to stay in the field. And so after my rifle platoon time, the battalion commander called me and said, hey Rog, I'm thinking maybe you ought to be the recon platoon leader. Of course, recon platoon leader in that outfit is something special.

[00:06:34.23] I said, I'd love to do that, which means I wouldn't have to be a company exec. I wouldn't have to run payroll up and down those highways at great risk. I wouldn't have to run chow back and forth necessarily. So in my orientation, I stayed in the field as a platoon leader.

[00:06:53.77] ROGER SCHULTZ: The first platoon was a mechanized infantry platoon. And I remember reporting to the company commander one evening. We had a great platoon. The squad leaders were all very, very short term trained Fort Benning, called them Shake 'N Bakes. They were--

[00:07:13.27] JOE GALLOWAY: They were 90 day wonders.

[00:07:16.21] ROGER SCHULTZ: And I tell you what, those Soldiers adopted me like I belonged there forever. I'll never forget it. And so here I come from my Guard outfit, my whole career has been Guard, OCS, now on active duty. Those Soldiers could have cared less where I

had gotten my commission, where I grew up, the fact that I had a time at Benning before I got there. What they wanted was a lieutenant.

[00:07:41.23] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:07:42.13] ROGER SCHULTZ: And I was their lieutenant. And almost immediately, within a day or two of the missions, it was clear to me that those guys wanted me in that platoon. And as you know this, the relationship in those combat units, in small formations, is tight. And so when you get down to the heart and soul of the Army, it's really formed at the small unit level. So I was wounded my first day in combat.

[00:08:12.19] JOE GALLOWAY: Wow.

[00:08:14.15] ROGER SCHULTZ: And the-- you hear all the stories. You go through jungle school. You go through all those replacement stations. I went through two different replacement routines in Vietnam. And they stand up there and say, a certain percentage of you are never going to go home. And so they have all these statistics and saying, why does that have to be?

[00:08:34.01] Well sure enough, on the first day, I'm in an aid station at our battalion headquarters in Dau Tieng. It's almost a separate story, but kids around me, Soldiers around me saved my life that first day. No question about it. I mean, I was losing enough blood that a couple minutes, and I probably wouldn't have been around. So--

[00:08:57.87] JOE GALLOWAY: What did you get hit by?

[00:08:59.54] ROGER SCHULTZ: RPG.

[00:09:00.50] JOE GALLOWAY: Ooh.

[00:09:03.89] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, in a mech outfit, the RPGs, Rocket-Propelled Grenades, are a pretty significant threat. I mean, they'll penetrate the side of a personnel carrier.

[00:09:12.68] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:09:13.58] ROGER SCHULTZ: A tank is a different story, but they'll penetrate a carrier.

[00:09:16.28] JOE GALLOWAY: You were-- your mech platoon were what, 113s?

[00:09:21.53] ROGER SCHULTZ: 113s, yeah. They had the diesel version engine, but they were 113 tracks basically. So-- and I mean, after that, I lost the CEOI, which is the communications instructions. And we strapped them around our neck. And you watched after-- these are frequencies and call signs which you change all the time, as you know.

[00:09:42.33] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:09:43.67] ROGER SCHULTZ: So--

[00:09:44.60] JOE GALLOWAY: You lost yours on the first day.

[00:09:46.43] ROGER SCHULTZ: When the guy-- the kids, I remember them taking off my-- I was injured right here in my shoulder. So took off the strap, the little cord on my CEOI, never to be found again.

[00:09:56.93] JOE GALLOWAY: [CHUCKLES]

[00:09:57.47] ROGER SCHULTZ: And so I spent the first couple of days of my time as a lieutenant in combat, answering questions about, why did you lose that CEOI?

[00:10:05.64] JOE GALLOWAY: How did you lose your-- [CHUCKLES]

[00:10:07.49] ROGER SCHULTZ: Now, and I don't remember it all. I was conscious the whole time, but I do remember Soldiers taking care of me instantly. And I remember them pulling that cord off my head, which is not a good answer for an inspector. They want to know where the--

[00:10:22.00] JOE GALLOWAY: They wanna know--

[00:10:22.34] ROGER SCHULTZ: that document--

[00:10:22.81] JOE GALLOWAY: --where it is.

[00:10:23.82] ROGER SCHULTZ: And my guess, I'm just guessing, but I'm guessing the-- we went back to the site, I'm guessing the enemy got it. But anyway--

[00:10:31.15] JOE GALLOWAY: You think they had to change everything?

[00:10:32.69] ROGER SCHULTZ: Which they change all the time anyway, but it was a loss, no doubt. So--

[00:10:36.77] JOE GALLOWAY: But how long were you out with the wound?

[00:10:40.88] ROGER SCHULTZ: I was back. I was back. I bandaged up. In about three days, I was back. Had a pretty quick recovery actually. And I was mission-- I was back to mission in a couple of days, three days. But it's the-- it was the Soldier reaction to that first contact that-- I mean, life altering experience, because of the way Soldiers react and support one another. And I'd been in uniform a while, gone through all the Army training, but you cannot describe that relationship until you get in that circumstance. It's really unusual, for sure.

[00:11:25.07] JOE GALLOWAY: These were your guys, and you were their lieutenant.

[00:11:27.77] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah. It's a different bond. They don't teach you this in school. I mean, these are kids I had never met in my life.

[00:11:36.02] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:11:36.53] ROGER SCHULTZ: They didn't know who I was, other than, I was their lieutenant.

[00:11:40.25] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:11:41.30] ROGER SCHULTZ: And so it was quite a tour.

[00:11:44.81] JOE GALLOWAY: They were lucky you were going to be in good--

[00:11:48.07] ROGER SCHULTZ: Right. In fact, when you talk about the responsibility as a lieutenant, if-- I mean, the stakes are so high. If a lieutenant is unable to lead-- I remember lieutenants leaving our unit in less than a day from the time they arrived. That's how high the stakes are.

[00:12:08.56] JOE GALLOWAY: They failed that quickly.

[00:12:09.85] ROGER SCHULTZ: Failed that quickly. Failed in less than four hours. So we talk about all the school, all the discipline, all the routine, all the rigor, all of the things that we go through to confirm that Roger, lieutenant in a platoon in Company A of the 2nd of the 22nd, is OK. Some get through those filters and just aren't able to make it.

[00:12:32.03] JOE GALLOWAY: To make it.

[00:12:33.11] ROGER SCHULTZ: Just to lead, it's--

[00:12:34.20] JOE GALLOWAY: Well, and 28 guys, their lives are in the palm of your hands.

[00:12:39.64] ROGER SCHULTZ: That's what's different about it.

[00:12:40.98] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:12:41.47] ROGER SCHULTZ: It's an obligation that's-- we talk about it in school, and it all makes perfect sense. But when you get on the ground in combat, that takes on different meaning. Because everything you do, everything you fail to do, all the decisions, all the anticipation, all the preparation. If you don't get that right, that's an obligation that can't even be described.

[00:13:04.95] ROGER SCHULTZ: Up early. We were on the move by five. And this-- being a mechanized outfit, we cleared lots of roads. Clearing roads for mines, enemy mines in particular. Antipersonnel, antitank mines were the common ones.

[00:13:21.42] JOE GALLOWAY: So first thing in the morning, you're out there running the road--

[00:13:24.51] ROGER SCHULTZ: Most days. If we had patrols the night before, we may not be the platoon that went out on the road clearing. But our company, our battalion, had road clearing going on all the time, at one place or another.

[00:13:37.50] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:13:38.31] ROGER SCHULTZ: So up early in the morning. Clear the roads, right after daylight, if not just before. And we had some road networks that just had to be maintained. You had to not only clear the mines, you had to secure them. And so we would outpost at various places, so that the traffic, the friendly convoys, could go to and from the critical location. So a typical day included some road clearing. Typical day-- looking back at some of the questions that you asked, we were almost always on the offense. I only remember one mission where we were in a blocking position. The rest of the time we were in an offensive--

[00:14:27.81] JOE GALLOWAY: Role--

[00:14:28.29] ROGER SCHULTZ: --framework. Moving. Then you come to the rainy season, and the only thing you can do with a track is stop. Because the tracks will bog down. And we operated in a lot of rice paddy areas. And so when you get a lot of rain, all you can do is stop the track. And so--

[00:14:46.38] JOE GALLOWAY: Become a fixed position--

[00:14:47.67] ROGER SCHULTZ: And we were all infantry Soldiers, and so you become a dismounted infantry Soldier. And what's interesting about it is, we had some helicopters, but we weren't in helicopters every day. And so when you go into some of our patrol operations, you went to and from in a helicopter. Or you just simply walked to ambush sites. And so we did some of all of that.

[00:15:13.87] But as I think about a typical day, it was morning to night. And when you're back at night-- I mean, I routinely helped Soldiers with guard duty, pulled a shift on security. Did it all the time. I walked point lots of times. I drove a personnel carrier. I ran a machine gun on the track. And I think back at some of this stuff, I should have never done that. But other than the fact that I wanted to be part of that platoon, so I did it. But it was the kind of schedule where there was never a break.

[00:15:52.45] So you say, what do you mean no break? In my tour we took a two day stand down at Tay Ninh.

[00:15:58.69] JOE GALLOWAY: That was it.

[00:15:59.05] ROGER SCHULTZ: That's all. That's it. And so the routine would be, long days. If you patrolled, you'd come back in maybe for a little recovery the following day. But other than that, it was pretty much-- I don't know how many hours. I'm guessing 16 to 18. I mean it was brutal.

[00:16:24.31] JOE GALLOWAY: What were your living quarters like? Did you--

[00:16:27.22] ROGER SCHULTZ: The ground.

[00:16:27.82] JOE GALLOWAY: --sleep on the track?

[00:16:28.57] ROGER SCHULTZ: The ground.

[00:16:29.50] JOE GALLOWAY: The ground?

[00:16:30.23] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah. We carried ammunition in the tracks. We carried--

[00:16:36.61] JOE GALLOWAY: So you didn't want to sleep in there.

[00:16:38.20] ROGER SCHULTZ: --carried 7.62-- really M60 machine gun ammunition-- caliber .50 is the M2 machine gun. That's a machine gun most of our tracks had. We carried a lot of C-4, composition four. So we had all kinds of demolition, det cord, we had it all, in every track.

[00:16:59.20] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:17:00.91] ROGER SCHULTZ: So for the most part, we slept on the ground. Get a cot-- JOE GALLOWAY: Dig a foxhole? ROGER SCHULTZ: --once in a while. Never did dig a foxhole. Do you mean like a fighting position?

[00:17:15.52] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:17:18.88] ROGER SCHULTZ: We had ways. We moved carriers in and around so we could always fight from the edges of the carriers or so. But we never we never did dig a trench.

[00:17:26.59] JOE GALLOWAY: Dig a hole, yeah.

[00:17:27.25] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah. Stayed pretty close to ground sometimes, but never did dig a foxhole. Now I say that, Joe, when you go back to like a base camp--

[00:17:38.40] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah. They had bunkers.

[00:17:41.76] ROGER SCHULTZ: We had all kinds of sandbags. All kinds of bunkers there. Those places were built up for some kind of--

[00:17:48.70] JOE GALLOWAY: Long term.

[00:17:49.17] ROGER SCHULTZ: --of contact. Yeah, that's-- I can't remember going back-- although we probably did, I can't remember going back to the same place twice. Like for an evening laager or something like that. We were always someplace new.

[00:18:04.93] JOE GALLOWAY: Someplace new.

[00:18:08.56] ROGER SCHULTZ: But back to your question, a typical day was pretty long. You'd get a couple hours sleep, maybe four, probably more sometimes. But that was about it.

And the challenge during those kind of environments is to stay alert. Soldiers after a while get tired. You physically just simply run out of energy.

[00:18:29.12] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:18:30.04] ROGER SCHULTZ: As you know. And so, that becomes one of the leadership challenges is keeping Soldiers alert.

[00:18:39.64] JOE GALLOWAY: You said you don't-- you didn't have any off-duty time, stand downs, et cetera. Two days in Tay Ninh.

[00:18:45.39] ROGER SCHULTZ: Very little. Well, since I was in a Guard unit, the guy said, hey, listen, you're not going to get a full year on the ground. You won't get a full year tour. And so I come up for R&R. There's an R&R schedule. I said, give my R&R space to somebody else. I don't want to take that. It just wasn't fair.

[00:19:08.02] And so-- and of course, there's an R&R roster, so someone else down the list picked up my R&R slot. The last thing I wanted to do was put in a tour, just simply by someone else's determination, put in less than a full year tour. And then take R&R, just because I had put in my minimum time. I just wouldn't do it.

[00:19:29.80] My orientation is, it takes a while getting to know what it's like in combat. It takes a while to develop those skills. It takes a while to develop that confidence. And once you have that feeling, that sense of-- I'm talking about contact with the enemy, the environment, what Soldiers need and expect from you, rightfully so. Then buddy, if you're good at this stuff, you're comfortable doing this, then don't walk away. What I didn't want to do is have a second transition. Like a second start over. Didn't want to do it.

[00:20:03.13] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:20:03.88] ROGER SCHULTZ: So I just turned my R&R slot over to somebody else.

[00:20:13.54] ROGER SCHULTZ: They seemed like decent people for the most part. I went through the Vietnamization program, which we were, the US was intentionally handing off the war to the South Vietnamese.

[00:20:26.30] JOE GALLOWAY: This is what year?

[00:20:27.94] ROGER SCHULTZ: '69. 1969.

[00:20:29.00] JOE GALLOWAY: '69, we were beginning to do that, yeah.

[00:20:31.75] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, so winning the hearts and minds was part of our mission. We were looking for a way to get to know these people. And I have to say, prior to that time, we didn't have a lot of contact with the villagers. Other than, we knew during the day they were friendly, and at night they'd-- some of them would go out and lay mines.

[00:20:52.12] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:20:54.43] ROGER SCHULTZ: In terms of the civilians, they were never part of an ambush on our formations. But no doubt about it that some were slipping out and laying mines in those road beds. And so, you never know who you could trust.

[00:21:06.49] JOE GALLOWAY: Right.

[00:21:07.16] ROGER SCHULTZ: You probably didn't because they all looked the same. They all dressed the same.

[00:21:10.21] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:21:11.83] ROGER SCHULTZ: Most of them-- I mean, these were crafty people. And so, you could be talking to an enemy and never know it.

[00:21:16.42] JOE GALLOWAY: You never know it.

[00:21:17.39] ROGER SCHULTZ: Never see it. And so the Soldiers struggled with that. We'd take fire, for example, from a village. And our reaction is to go down and level that place. You can't do that because there's too many innocent people there. And the enemy was crafty enough to operate in those environments. And so--

[00:21:33.40] JOE GALLOWAY: Did you have translators assigned to your unit?

[00:21:37.30] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yes, we did. Yeah we had translators. Yeah, I took some Vietnamese before I actually went to Vietnam. So you could get by with some of the basic language. But the enemy was crafty. They were pretty good. If you think about the North Vietnamese, or the hardcore VC, that's a fighting outfit.

[00:21:56.17] JOE GALLOWAY: They're fighting people.

[00:21:57.61] ROGER SCHULTZ: That's a pretty crafty infantry soldier. The Regional Forces, the Popular Forces, the local soldier, that's a little bit different in terms of just the quality and their own orientation. But if you made contact with a North Vietnamese Army unit, or the hardcore VC--

[00:22:16.75] JOE GALLOWAY: You better have your game pants on.

[00:22:19.24] ROGER SCHULTZ: --you've got your hands full with those guys. That is a fighting formation.

[00:22:24.81] JOE GALLOWAY: And some of those main force VC guys had been fighting for 20 years.

[00:22:31.66] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah. The hardcore VC almost had a different motivation. It was almost more personal. These kids came from South Vietnam origin, so they didn't have the North Vietnamese orientation. I'll tell you, pretty crafty enemy. This was a force for some kind of recognition, respect.

[00:22:59.82] JOE GALLOWAY: You didn't respect them, they'd kill you.

[00:23:02.34] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, no doubt about it. ROGER SCHULTZ: The Korean soldiers, saw them in base camp once in a while. Didn't have any with the Aussies. Worked with the South Vietnamese airborne.

[00:23:18.22] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:23:19.27] ROGER SCHULTZ: That's a serious outfit. Those guys, those troops were good. So-- airborne outfit, of course, is all the light infantry. And so they don't have vehicles like we do. And so this is for us pretty exciting time. And so we bring in an airborne outfit from Saigon. Nobody knew what this was going to be like, this experience. And this was part of the Vietnamization, you've got to bring in the war--

[00:23:44.47] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:23:45.49] ROGER SCHULTZ: --from the South Vietnamese army's point of view. And so we're in contact one day, and I'll remember this forever, I heard a bugle. What the heck is that? And the bugle is the sound of an assault, of a charge, in that airborne outfit. And that's a signal for these soldiers to charge. And I could hear it over the personnel carriers. I could hear it over the machine guns cracking. I said, what the heck is that? And that's a call to go into an assault. These guys were courageous. They were every bit the soldiers we had. They were unbelievable.

[00:24:24.15] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:24:25.24] ROGER SCHULTZ: At least in my reflection, they were really, really good.

[00:24:27.97] JOE GALLOWAY: NVA used whistles somehow.

[00:24:30.45] ROGER SCHULTZ: They did, yeah. Yeah, they--

[00:24:31.96] JOE GALLOWAY: Used whistles.

[00:24:32.68] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, they were good at it. Yeah, they had a certain communications. Because that's all they had was--

[00:24:37.80] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:24:45.08] ROGER SCHULTZ: When you arrive in a unit by yourself, you become part of the team pretty quickly in a combat outfit. But you're so busy, you don't get to know Soldiers.

I'm talking about really, really-- well personally, but the-- we had some phenomenal Soldiers. And these are courageous, unbelievably courageous young people.

[00:25:06.04] JOE GALLOWAY: What percentage draftees in your unit?

[00:25:10.64] ROGER SCHULTZ: I'm going to say, it seemed to me over half. 80%, I would think. What I found though, is that the draftees didn't have a different attitude. That's what was interesting about it.

[00:25:22.97] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:25:23.24] ROGER SCHULTZ: They were there to serve. And so we didn't have a bad attitude draftee bunch, for example. Never had any of that stuff.

[00:25:30.42] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:25:31.16] ROGER SCHULTZ: Part of that-- I thought about it years later, part of that is, everybody's lives depended on one another. And so you developed a certain kind of reliance on your fellow Soldier, so--

[00:25:45.62] JOE GALLOWAY: And your NCOs were draftees, as well.

[00:25:49.59] ROGER SCHULTZ: Oh yeah, absolutely. Pretty well educated, when you think about the percentage of Vietnam Soldiers. When I say educated, I'm talking about high school diploma grads.

[00:26:02.56] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:26:02.75] ROGER SCHULTZ: So young kids, I remember them. A few NCOs, I'm talking about non-commissioned officers that had some experience. But most of these Soldiers were young. Like, younger than I. I was 24 at the time.

[00:26:17.69] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah, you were an old man.

[00:26:18.87] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, I was old by-- JOE GALLOWAY: By their standards. ROGER SCHULTZ: These were young Soldiers.

[00:26:25.37] JOE GALLOWAY: They were 18-19.

[00:26:27.26] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, and you think about that. Why would they do that? Why would they be so courageous? And really what they were doing is living their oath. They were living the oath they took. In spite of the silliness, in spite some of the things we asked those Soldiers to do. I remember-- as you get to know Soldiers, they'll start to talk a little bit. So we had all the riots back in the day, and so that bothered Soldiers because they'd hear about some of this on the radio.

[00:26:57.33] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:26:57.84] ROGER SCHULTZ: In the end they would say, what are we doing here? What's the purpose of all this stuff? If our nation doesn't want us over here-- it's a key point-- if our nation doesn't want us over here. And so there's a--

[00:27:09.39] JOE GALLOWAY: Tough question.

[00:27:10.98] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, it is. It's a genuine question. No doubt about it. So back to your question about the relationships. In a combat unit, you'll form strong bonds pretty quickly because everybody's life depends on another. And it sounds cold, but that's what it's like in a combat outfit.

[00:27:42.95] ROGER SCHULTZ: I don't know that one mission was more significant than another. The days run together. I mean, I was a piece of three campaigns, three separate campaigns, and this was all post-Tet. Tet--

[00:27:59.62] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:27:59.98] ROGER SCHULTZ: Tet was basically over just as I was arriving there. I'm talking about the major Tet period. So we were in a counteroffensive in that period. So all I can think of is our focus on offense. We were always looking for that enemy. To go out and defend someplace just because it was there, we didn't do that.

[00:28:28.85] JOE GALLOWAY: It was all chasing them.

[00:28:31.84] ROGER SCHULTZ: Exactly. And so, I don't know. There wasn't a single mission. I mean, it was almost a difference in the environment. We went from rice paddies to Nui Ba Den, Black Virgin Mountain, and that's a pretty good size. In that terrain, you're talking about 980-some meters. So that's a pretty good size.

[00:28:57.90] JOE GALLOWAY: Pretty good sized mountain.

[00:28:59.08] ROGER SCHULTZ: So we would go into the base of Nui Ba Den and fight the enemy. And the enemy, the North Vietnamese were in the middle of Nui Ba Den. And then we had a little signals center on top of the mountain.

[00:29:12.31] JOE GALLOWAY: [CHUCKLES]

[00:29:13.88] ROGER SCHULTZ: And so--

[00:29:14.68] JOE GALLOWAY: Supplied by helicopter.

[00:29:17.02] ROGER SCHULTZ: Purely.

[00:29:17.65] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:29:18.88] ROGER SCHULTZ: And that's some nasty terrain in there. So I mean, those kind of extremes, almost the difference between the Dau Tieng in the west, the Razorback slightly north of Dau Tieng, which is a little mountain complex. And when you're in a mechanized outfit, it's not like driving down the road all the time. I mean, you get in some rough spots over there. And so I would guess the significance is offense. Almost all the time in some offensive framework. And the fact that the conditions were so varying from one mission to the next. And so--

[00:29:51.25] JOE GALLOWAY: What kind of casualties were you taking in your platoon?

[00:29:56.47] ROGER SCHULTZ: I didn't have any while I was in the rifle platoon. And the day after I left, we lost five.

[00:30:00.46] JOE GALLOWAY: Hmm.

[00:30:01.24] ROGER SCHULTZ: Went to the scout recon platoon. And yeah, they had five Soldiers lost that day. Just ripped my heart out.

[00:30:06.91] JOE GALLOWAY: On the day that you left or the day--

[00:30:09.07] ROGER SCHULTZ: The day after I left.

[00:30:10.14] JOE GALLOWAY: The day after you left.

[00:30:11.80] ROGER SCHULTZ: Ran into a really nasty ambush. Spider holes, a whole kind of thing. Where as a--

[00:30:18.77] JOE GALLOWAY: With a new lieutenant.

[00:30:20.32] ROGER SCHULTZ: Brand new, yeah. Yeah, that was a tough go. We were in the area of a determined enemy, but our outfit was so enormously powerful. We had firepower that most people would just beg for. And if we got in a fight, we could sustain that for hours because we simply had the ammunition and the weapon systems to really work an enemy over. And so it was a tough go.

[00:30:52.89] The toughest day I had was when we lost our company commander, David Crocker. A great Soldier. I mean, I'd only been in the company, in A Company, for just a short while. But Crocker is one of those guys, special. West Point, Academy grad. Cared deeply for Soldiers. And Crocker and I, Dave Crocker and I, developed an immediate relationship. I mean, hard to describe. And so a couple of weeks after I arrived in that company, Crocker's radio telephone operator tripped a booby trap.

[00:31:33.30] JOE GALLOWAY: Oh.

[00:31:34.14] ROGER SCHULTZ: And shrapnel fragments--

[00:31:36.41] JOE GALLOWAY: Took them both out.

[00:31:37.16] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yep, took them both out. A metal fragment went through his heart. He died immediately, so-- In our battalion, this was in the 2nd of the 22nd, we were tracking. There was a four year period we lost 384 Soldiers.

[00:31:53.97] JOE GALLOWAY: Oh.

[00:31:55.51] ROGER SCHULTZ: So, yeah. ROGER SCHULTZ: Serving with fellow soldiers that care about each other. I feel good about having served there. I don't feel good about the losses we took in that country, for the circumstances. And if you want to talk about it, I will later. The memory would be that the US Army, in this case the 2nd of the 22nd Infantry, performed the duties that our nation asked them to perform. That would be the memory.

[00:32:50.26] We tried to turn over the war to the Vietnamese in the Vietnamization. Our Soldiers probably cared more about the fighting than the Vietnamese did. So that Vietnamization didn't work real well. We were trying to win the hearts and minds of the population.

[00:33:10.91] And we were taking columns, 113s, through rice paddies when they're trying to grow rice. And civilians-- it's really hard on relationships. It's just hard to make sense of it all. But I suppose the memory is, units performing the missions they were given, in spite of all the demanding circumstances around them.

[00:33:35.37] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:33:41.70] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, coming back from a mission when nobody was hurt. Getting on the airplane, I guess.

[00:33:49.80] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah. A lot of people say leaving was the best day.

[00:33:55.44] ROGER SCHULTZ: I suppose. I suppose. Worked pretty hard to train the leaders in the unit as you go through those experiences. I would think the best day is-- is just simply leaving the country. Getting on the plane. But when you get down to day to day reality, it's really, really the Soldiers around you. When you think about a lieutenant, in my mind, it's about keeping the Soldiers.

[00:34:41.08] Everybody talks about a mission. And the number one thing in an infantry lieutenant's mind is the mission. That's embedded in your mind. But you don't get the mission done without Soldiers. And so it's that reflection on Soldiers that make this real. Makes it more significant in my mind.

[00:35:03.86] ROGER SCHULTZ: I got married a couple of months before I deployed for Vietnam.

[00:35:07.85] JOE GALLOWAY: OK. So what, did you tell your wife you were turning that R&R down?

[00:35:12.74] ROGER SCHULTZ: I did not. She learned after I got home.

[00:35:15.64] JOE GALLOWAY: (LAUGHS)

[00:35:16.87] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah.

[00:35:17.53] JOE GALLOWAY: She beat you around the head and shoulders a bit?

[00:35:20.03] ROGER SCHULTZ: Well, you want to talk about this later maybe, but that first year home was tough. That was a rascal. I mean, in a couple of weeks, we will have been married 47 years. So we're over the tough spot.

[00:35:31.56] JOE GALLOWAY: Good.

[00:35:32.30] ROGER SCHULTZ: [CHUCKLES]

[00:35:34.01] JOE GALLOWAY: How much contact did you have with your family back home?

[00:35:40.72] ROGER SCHULTZ: Letters. Letters. Mom and Dad, sister once in a while. I wrote my wife, not frequently. But I mean, contact I had was basically by letter.

[00:35:52.94] JOE GALLOWAY: By letter. How much news did you receive about the war that you were fighting?

[00:36:03.28] ROGER SCHULTZ: Not very much.

[00:36:04.84] JOE GALLOWAY: Stars and Stripes.

[00:36:06.10] ROGER SCHULTZ: We'd pick up Stars and Stripes a little bit. We'd get a radio station once in a while. And that was primarily it. You could get a radio station on occasion that was decent reception. So not very much, really.

[00:36:20.65] JOE GALLOWAY: You knew, of course, that there were protests and demonstrations.

[00:36:24.52] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah. We all knew. Bothered the Soldiers more than it did me, for some odd reason. Well, if you're in a rifle team or squad, you look at things a little differently than you might if you had platoon responsibilities. But yeah, things back home bothered Soldiers. And what they were really talking about would be the lack of evident support for what they were doing. So-- laying down my life for what?

[00:36:52.36] JOE GALLOWAY: Especially after Tet.

[00:36:54.57] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, so that's-- Tet was probably the event that changed--

[00:36:59.84] JOE GALLOWAY: The watermark, the high watermark.

[00:37:01.84] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah.

[00:37:05.85] JOE GALLOWAY: The news, that kind of stuff didn't affect you as much--

[00:37:09.21] ROGER SCHULTZ: Not as much.

[00:37:09.80] JOE GALLOWAY: -- as it did the troops?

[00:37:13.37] ROGER SCHULTZ: And I don't know why? But I do know it bothered Soldiers because we talked about it.

[00:37:17.99] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:37:19.28] ROGER SCHULTZ: And their question to me is, what are we doing here? Why are we doing what we are? And well, the short answer that is, you're doing what you were ordered to do. That's part of the oath. But that answer comes up a little short when you say, wait a minute, does our nation want us-- and you're talking about the voting public here, when you say our nation.

[00:37:38.50] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:37:38.76] ROGER SCHULTZ: It's not the elected officials.

[00:37:40.31] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:37:40.79] ROGER SCHULTZ: It's heart and soul of Main Street America that's coming up with this--

[00:37:43.94] JOE GALLOWAY: If they aren't supporting us, why are we here?

[00:37:46.58] ROGER SCHULTZ: Precisely.

[00:37:47.45] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:37:48.47] ROGER SCHULTZ: And I have to say, on any day, I probably never did have a good answer for those Soldiers. Never did.

[00:37:52.10] JOE GALLOWAY: Nobody did.

[00:37:59.22] ROGER SCHULTZ: I got off the airport in Travis Air Base, California. And I remember coming down the ramp of that airplane thinking, wow, this is something special. And someone said, hey, you're back in the US. Had khakis on at the time. They said, get your uniform off. We don't wear uniforms here. We were going to go down and have a steak or something. Forgot what it was. And the first thing I was told to do is take my uniform off. I said, there's something wrong about this.

[00:38:28.47] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:38:29.46] ROGER SCHULTZ: Something that just doesn't make good sense. Anyway, that was an overreaction on the part of somebody, no doubt. But a short stop on Travis Air Base, and then on a plane out of San Francisco and headed to Denver, Colorado. And met my wife and her parents there in Denver, and that's it. That would be the welcome home. And for me--

[00:38:52.18] JOE GALLOWAY: That was enough.

[00:38:53.35] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, it's really enough. But out of that experience, I'm going to tell you, we learned about the importance of appropriately welcoming Soldiers home. And what that means to them. What that means to their family. Why we should do it. And so there's a group of Vietnam vets going up about the day, I was coming through the ranks. And what we said to ourselves was, we're never doing this again. We will not let this happen again.

[00:39:17.17] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah. Says a whole lot about sending a unit in and bringing them out together.

[00:39:22.90] ROGER SCHULTZ: Right.

[00:39:24.98] JOE GALLOWAY: It's-- for their--

[00:39:26.47] ROGER SCHULTZ: There's no doubt about it, yeah.

[00:39:27.64] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah. You made reference earlier that your first year back was kind of hard. Tell me about that.

[00:39:38.79] ROGER SCHULTZ: Well, I don't know what it was. For some odd reason, I felt like I was at war. I couldn't just flip a switch. I mean, I knew I was in safe country. But like at night, I was always alert. When you sleep, I was on edge.

[00:39:59.50] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:40:01.16] ROGER SCHULTZ: And it took a while.

[00:40:02.03] JOE GALLOWAY: You walk down the road, you're looking for ambush points.

[00:40:04.30] ROGER SCHULTZ: It took longer than I thought. And so, yeah, that first year was a rascal. That was a tough go. Now, I was really busy. All I can think of is, I was busy enough that I wasn't distracted by lots of other things that might have given me a little spare time. So that probably helped some.

[00:40:24.88] JOE GALLOWAY: What were you doing that first year back?

[00:40:28.69] ROGER SCHULTZ: Well, I signed on as-- there were two officers in the mech battalion that I was mobilized with. Two officers that were full time. And so, I signed on as a trainer for the 2nd Battalion of the 133rd Infantry.

[00:40:43.78] JOE GALLOWAY: Back home in Iowa.

[00:40:44.32] ROGER SCHULTZ: Which was a-- back home in Iowa, in a mechanized infantry world. In that first six months, 650 of our Soldiers' terms of enlistment expired.

[00:40:57.33] JOE GALLOWAY: Ooh.

[00:40:57.73] ROGER SCHULTZ: 600-plus Soldiers. So what was I doing?

[00:41:01.29] JOE GALLOWAY: Recruiting.

[00:41:01.72] ROGER SCHULTZ: Small team, we were recruiting. You just picture that.

[00:41:04.67] JOE GALLOWAY: [CHUCKLES]

[00:41:05.86] ROGER SCHULTZ: Because the Soldiers that are now back home, they've now been released from active duty, and they've now completed their active tours of duty. And so they are about the countryside. They're going back to their wives, families, jobs, or whatever. And so we had to replace that mech battalion with a new Soldier. So a piece of what was--

[00:41:24.96] JOE GALLOWAY: They weren't at that point, very much inclined to re-enlist.

[00:41:28.42] ROGER SCHULTZ: Well, it's interesting, because we actually reached our enlistment objectives in that period.

[00:41:35.53] JOE GALLOWAY: Wow.

[00:41:35.89] ROGER SCHULTZ: Of course, the Vietnam War was slowing a little bit. They were taking the total strength down a little bit, so that helped some. So I guess in that first year I was busy enough, distracted enough from the rest of the things, but I do remember I was-- for some odd reason, I was a little spooky for that first year.

[00:41:56.12] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah. How much contact have you had with fellow veterans of that war over the years?

[00:42:07.91] ROGER SCHULTZ: I talk with some by phone, and talk with some by email. I've not been to a Triple Deuce-- a 2nd of the 22nd-- reunion. I've got to do that. I've got to get to one of those. I've had schedules that have really been tough enough, I've not done that. But there are some Soldiers I need to go see in that outfit because we're all getting up there in years, so--

[00:42:29.95] JOE GALLOWAY: Exactly.

[00:42:30.64] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah. Mrs. Crocker, Ruth Crocker, is David Crocker's wife. I've got to see her one day. I've talked with her by email, but I need to see her and spend a little time with her. But for Vietnam vets, I still hang around a lot of Vietnam vets. Pretty active contact with the ones in northwest Iowa, still. And so we change emails back and forth, basically.

[00:43:03.75] JOE GALLOWAY: Is there any memory or experience from your service in Vietnam that has stayed with you through the years and had a lasting influence on your life?

[00:43:13.69] ROGER SCHULTZ: Oh, without a doubt. The cost of war is one. The human dimension of war. Most people look at it-- if you're not affected directly, most people look at this from a distance. The human dimension of war is staggering. When you get down close and personal, this is serious. And so when you think about 58,000-plus names on that Wall, plus how many others that are affected forever, whose names will not be on that Wall. How many still missing in action?

[00:43:47.66] That is staggering to me. And the lesson from all of that in my mind comes from a 1973 speech by President Nixon. He's welcoming back the POWs, former POWs, at the White House. And he said, when I arrived in office four-and-a-half-- I'm going to paraphrase a little bit. I arrived in office four-and-a-half years ago, we were losing 300 killed in action. He's talking now, this is per week. 300 KIAs, but there was no plan to end this war.

[00:44:27.37] And so I reflect back on that to say, wow, we had 58,200-plus who lost their lives in Vietnam, and we had no plan to end this war. Now from a military perspective, there were always plans to end the war. What we were missing was a political component to what I'm talking about here.

[00:44:47.00] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:44:47.55] ROGER SCHULTZ: The message is, as important as ever going into war, is the exit. What's the plan? How do you get out of here? You've got to know how to get out of here. And so I mean, I've got Vietnam experiences that I was determined-- and I stayed in uniform for almost 43 years. I said, as long as I'm around, I'm going to do what I can to make sure that others don't go through the same thing we did. Ever.

[00:45:11.01] And a piece of that is in preparation. A piece of that is preparing families for the reality of what they might have around the corner. And it's hard. It's hard, but the Soldiers that I grew up around gave me enough confidence that the model that I'm describing is pretty important and is reasonable.

[00:45:33.63] So for me, the cost of war is staggering. And we should never forget that, as it relates to when we take our nation to war. Why do we take our nation to war? And it seems to me that there ought to be a lesson or two from Vietnam. There ought to be a lesson or two from Afghanistan or from Iraq. What are those lessons? And you have to so embed that in the mindset of our nation's leaders that we remember, learn from these things.

[00:46:09.57] So I did what I could do to counter some of those realities. And it's an appreciation really for a person who takes an oath. Said, I'll do whatever you tell me to do. That should mean something to our nation. It should mean something to voting public. It should mean something to those in the military.

[00:46:33.29] A lot of people don't understand that leadership in the military, the last thing in the world that we want to do is go to war. I'm telling you, do everything you can to prevent it. OK, you know something else? You better be ready. And the be ready side is the cost. If you have to go there, this is serious stuff, and it ought to be taken very, very seriously on the part of our nation. You just have to be-- you've got to be really careful with approaching lives casually.

[00:47:03.20] JOE GALLOWAY: There's no casual to it.

[00:47:05.02] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, so anyway, I don't know if I've answered your question, so--

[00:47:08.09] JOE GALLOWAY: I think you did.

[00:47:08.72] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, that's a tough one, but--

[00:47:10.25] JOE GALLOWAY: I think you did. Did your experience in Vietnam combat affect the way you think about veterans coming home from combat today?

[00:47:21.02] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, we didn't know how to treat Soldiers back in the day. Soldiers struggled from Vietnam experiences, labeled them with a character disorder, and that's the treatment they got. I mean, we've got to do better than that. And I'm talking about enough sophistication in our medical community and the professionals that can help us. So the answer is, it's something that affected me forever.

[00:47:53.63] You might remember United 232, a crash-- aircraft-- Sioux City, Iowa. United flight that lost all its hydraulic controls. And Al Haynes took that-- he was going to Chicago. He took that aircraft, a DC-10, back into Sioux City.

[00:48:11.87] And I was working in the operations center in Des Moines at the time, Des Moines, Iowa. And so we lost well over 100 people in that crash, and a number survived. But one of the things we said is, get the responders-- these were Soldiers and Airmen from local Guard units-- get the responders some recovery time with professionals, with people who know how to talk with you about the mental impact of what you just experienced. It's like combat.

[00:48:41.69] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:48:42.28] ROGER SCHULTZ: Because humans are-- they're going to struggle with that. So when you think of 100-plus people that we lost in that aircraft, and I'm equating that to the combat related losses where that's an extreme experience on the part of anybody. And so you're not less the citizen, you're not less the Soldier, for having need of a little professional discussion.

[00:49:04.76] He said, wait a minute, hey Roger, you didn't grow up that way. That's not the way the military operates. I'm suggesting to you a brief discussion like that can be enormously helpful. And I'm talking about the PTS and some of the things that people talk about today.

[00:49:17.32] JOE GALLOWAY: Right.

[00:49:17.66] ROGER SCHULTZ: How do you help people mentally work through some of these things?

[00:49:22.07] JOE GALLOWAY: We better figure it out--

[00:49:23.64] ROGER SCHULTZ: Did the same thing with our--

[00:49:24.93] JOE GALLOWAY: --because there are a lot of people from Afghanistan and Iraq.

[00:49:27.79] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah.

[00:49:28.52] JOE GALLOWAY: Those eight tour veterans.

[00:49:30.86] ROGER SCHULTZ: Precisely. And it's compounded when you talk about an eight tour veteran. That is a significant task.

[00:49:36.20] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:49:36.92] ROGER SCHULTZ: So why was the--

[00:49:38.15] JOE GALLOWAY: They put a mighty burden on an all volunteer Army.

[00:49:41.72] ROGER SCHULTZ: Unbelievable.

[00:49:42.49] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:49:43.70] ROGER SCHULTZ: We sent lots of people in response to the 2001 attacks, 9/11 attacks.

[00:49:49.70] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:49:51.02] ROGER SCHULTZ: I was director of the Guard at the time. I said the same thing. I said to get those people daily debriefs, spend time with them. And everybody talks about a weakness. If Roger needs to have a brief discussion, all of a sudden you're not the Soldier. You're not the tough--

[00:50:06.74] JOE GALLOWAY: That's nonsense.

[00:50:08.09] ROGER SCHULTZ: And so anyway, I've applied some of the Vietnam lessons to this discussion, in that sense. And that's years and years later, I'm trying to apply some of the things that we didn't do so well back in Vietnam.

[00:50:19.89] JOE GALLOWAY: We paid a mighty tuition. We should have learned some things from that.

[00:50:24.93] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yes. Yeah, there's no doubt about it.

[00:50:28.74] JOE GALLOWAY: How do you think the Vietnam War is remembered in our society today, or is it?

[00:50:34.74] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, generally, it's not. Not well understood. Some of this goes back to just the general attitude about those who serve. The piece we missed in Vietnam was those who served. And I'm talking about selfless, courageous service. Then all of a sudden, given the way that we left that countryside, or maybe the way the nation reacted to our being there in the first place, this is after Tet and after the protests.

[00:51:13.45] At the same time though, I'm not bashing any of the senior political leaders, but the point is, the nature of how we all handled that is a pretty sad documentary. And I'm not certain we've learned from all of that. So what do we know about the Vietnam War? Probably not so much. And I'm not talking about the veterans, I'm not-- we say welcome home. We're still saying welcome home to Vietnam vets that we find that no one's ever talked with.

[00:51:43.03] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:51:44.49] ROGER SCHULTZ: They say, oh yeah, you're-- hey, you're overstating your welcome home. OK, fine. So maybe welcome home is not the theme. But it seems to me, we ought to thank, and we ought to honor the service. We're coming up on 50 years or a series of years for 50 years of experience now. And so we should for sure recognize the service. And this is selfless service. This is something special, no doubt.

[00:52:13.75] JOE GALLOWAY: Did you take away from Vietnam more that was positive and useful than you invested in blood, sweat, and tears?

[00:52:23.35] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yes, I think so. Personal growth, for one. I talk about Vietnam somewhat reluctantly. And I've not talked about it very much. It was probably 30-plus years before I said anything of substance about that war experience. Because when you came back home, even if you were still in uniform, you weren't looked upon as somebody special. It wasn't significant that you'd just been to combat and back.

[00:52:57.42] And so the way we left that countryside, meaning Vietnam, it put a very different tone on people. So I would say, not very well understood, which is a piece of our 50th commemorative program.

[00:53:17.95] JOE GALLOWAY: What lessons did you take from Vietnam that you would like to pass on to future generations of Americans?

[00:53:26.07] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, it's a good question. It's selfless service. It's taking an oath. It's being part of something that's really, really special. I'm talking about serving our nation. Signing up to making an individual contribution. Signing up to something greater than yourself. It's beyond an individual. And it's about service. And it's about service beyond the individuals that I think we need to focus on.

[00:54:03.19] And as I talk about this is-- I mean, I grew up with World War II and Korean War vets. And we had them in our platoons. They were platoon sergeants when I joined. And so in terms of an orientation for a young Soldier-- about the Army, and about what we do in our Army, and what's important, and how to act, how to respond-- I learned that all from vets. And so what we need to do is do some of the same things because there are lots of lessons you can take from a Vietnam experience and apply them today.

[00:54:43.36] So what's new? What do young people, middle school, high school, think of the Vietnam War? What do you think of all of that? What do you remember about it? The answer is, they won't remember anything about it. They could make it--

[00:54:56.34] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah, the textbook is about that much.

[00:54:57.71] ROGER SCHULTZ: Yeah, you couldn't point to Vietnam on a map, sort of thing. So part of this is our own education that we have to take on to just inform people. It's part of our nation's experience.

[00:55:10.99] So a lesson, if you just think about one lesson, and I've thought about this, from my-- of course, you forget certain things as you grow older. But back to my lieutenant days we, on the ground tactically, we were a serious fighting outfit. I mean, unbelievable. So well, what's that look like? Day to day, with that enemy force in our area, we could stand up without any question. So in terms of a tactical operation, we were unbelievable.

[00:55:43.24] But you know what? That doesn't mean anything if you don't have the political support, doesn't mean a thing. I'm talking about the tactical kind of presence, dominance. It means absolutely nothing if the military and the political interest is not in sync. It just doesn't mean a thing. And if you don't apply the synchronization, I'm talking about the overlying interest between a military and a political setting, then be careful, be really careful. And so that would describe my experience of Vietnam is that issue.

[00:56:29.10] ROGER SCHULTZ: I used to come, of course, from Iowa. Growing up in the ranks in the Iowa Guard, I was an operations officer, chief of staff, later. Then a deputy general for Iowa. When I'd come here, I come to that Wall every time. And just, I'm going to tell you a quick story. So the person that convinced me to go to OCS, yeah, a buddy of mine.

[00:57:01.91] He goes to Vietnam before I do. He goes to jungle school, after the 1st Cav. So I'm now in jungle school, and I am about-- we just graduated, and we were all jungle experts at the time. And I am leaving that mess hall, and I got a call that Corb Tyndall was killed.

[00:57:22.13] And this is a guy that had been a buddy of mine, like a brother, I mean, like really close. And so, when you think about those kinds of things, I mean, that's affected me to this day. That the Soldier who I had such respect for, and such a close relationship, was gone. And so I went to the Wall, and I would look up Corb Tyndall.

[00:57:49.97] My reaction on that Wall is-- it's a reflection. It's a reminder. I'm back to cost of war now. It's a reminder of the significant price that people paid, people were willing to pay. And it ought to be pretty sobering to us as a nation, as to what's happened there. And as I say this, I'm not talking down at any of the other war veterans. I'm just talking about a reflection of Vietnam.

[00:58:23.24] ROGER SCHULTZ: I think it's appropriate. We're working hard on them. I'm on the committee, and we're working hard on the messaging. What should we be saying? And how do we single out-- essentially the thing we've been talking about here is, how do we take not just in lessons, not just in our experience, but how do we take this discussion to a level that's meaningful for the younger generation? What does all this begin to mean to us? What should you know about that war?

[00:58:51.23] And I would offer up, there's a communication to the members of Congress about our Vietnam experience. What does that mean? And I'm not talking about all the statistics that everyone should be concerned about, I'm talking about the lessons. And what was going on. And enough appreciation about what was going on. I'm talking about the conditions that we found ourselves in the early '60s in that countryside. What we as a nation were trying to do.

[00:59:15.36] And so in our commemorative discussions, we're looking at ways to help communicate with the public about the Vietnam War experience and about individual service above self. I mean, that's what this is really all about. And so the 50th commemoration, we've had a lot of discussion. Well is it a commemoration? What are you trying to do with this program? And for us, it's communicate a summary of the Vietnam War experience and reflect on the service of sacrifice. A thanks, honoring those who served.

[00:59:53.98] JOE GALLOWAY: Thank you, General Schultz.

[00:59:55.33] ROGER SCHULTZ: [CHUCKLES]